

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /071 W

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P 291830Z OCT 76

FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 768

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL MONTREAL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUEBEC 0300

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CA

SUBJECT: BOURASSA BUFFETED

REF: QUEBEC 291

1. PREMIER BOURASSA WAS HARASSED YESTERDAY IN CHICOUTIMI BY STRIKERS FROM LOCAL ALCAN /LANTS AND SERVICE STATION OPERATORS. HE WAS FORCED CUT SHORT ELECTION MEETING AT CITY HALL WHEN GROUP OF ANGRY DEMONSTRATORS INVADED CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER WHERE PREMIER WAS TO GIVE SPEECH TO LIBERAL PARTY FAITHFUL. THROUGHOUT HIS VISIT TO CHICOUTIMI, BOURASSA WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ESCORT OF HORN-HONKING, EMERGENCY LIGHT FLASHING TOW TRUCKS DRIVEN BY ANGRY SERVICE STATION OPERATORS.

2. DEPARTING FROM HIS NOW FAMILIAR REMARKS ON GOVERNMENT POLICY, (SEE REFTEL), BOURASSA ATTEMPTED APPEASE DEMONSTRATORS WITH COMMENTS REGARDING PROGRESS WHICH HE SAID HAS BEEN MADE RECENTLY WITH HELP OF GOVERNMENT APPOINTED MEDIATOR TO FIND SOLUTION TO FIVE MONTH LONG STRIKE AT ALCAN, ACCORDING PRESS REPORTS.

3. COMMENT: AS HE MOVES OUT FROM HIS ACCUSTOMED ISOLATION IN AN ATTEMPT TO REACH VOTERS, BOURASSA HAS BECOME A TARGET FOR VARIOUS DISCONTENTED GROUPS THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE. FOR
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MANY, THE PREMIER SYMBOLIZES THE FRUSTRATIONS AND PROBLEMS

THEY CONFRONT IN A PROFOUNDLY TROUBLED QUEBEC BUFFETED BY
BEWILDERING SOCIAL CHANGE, ECONOMIC HARD TIMES, AND EXTERNAL
CHALLENGES FROM INCREASINGLY HOSTILE ANGLOPHONES ELSEWHERE
IN CANADA. TO BOOT, THE PREMIER'S COOL, SOMEWHAT EFFETE EXTERIOR
SEEMS TO EVOKE HOSTILITY FROM SAME LESS WELL MANICURED ELEMENTS
IN QUEBEC SOCIETY.

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